

Port's Corner.

FOR THE BLOOMFIELD GAZETTE.
IN MY STOCKING.

Yes, I'll hang it, just for fun,
In the old, the dear old spot;
Santa Claus has not yet spun
All of merry mine I wot.

Let what could I wish indeed?
Sweet, prophetic soul be still!
Dohler! I were a naughty greed
Thus anticipating Will.

But, we girls of this wise day,
Ain't as grannies were of old;
Sweet and true, I guess, as they;
Sharper: let us should be sold.

This needed, it must be
Ample plans of cottage sweet,
Near the sea, and murmuring sea—
Just a snug, unique retreat.

Promises, in black and white,
Of a "turn-out," fit to vie
With a Donner, if in sight;
Miss must be so evasive sigh.

And the avenue, in the way,
Deduced must the mansion be,
To my right, by Blackstone's gown,
Simply "business," don't you see?

Pia-mo-nie must be assured,
Say, five thousand, nominal;
If no margin be endured,
I'll just "cut up" hominable!

Last, my own oblivious Will,
My happiness were not complete,
Till you a policy can fill—
For life's uncertain, ain't it sweet?

Of fifty thousand, low, indeed!
On your, to me, so precious life,
If subscribed to, I'm agreed
To—become your little wife.

Orange. H. C. V.

A HEATHEN MARRIAGE.

[Through the kindness of Mrs. McDowell, we are enabled to gratify our young readers with the following letter from Heathen Land.—Eps.]

To the Bloomfield Schools:

I DARE say, my dear children, you have many of you, witnessed a marriage ceremony, and thought it very pleasant. If I were to describe to you a heathen marriage, I think you would be very thankful you were not born a heathen child.

One beautiful autumnal morning we heard that a prominent man, whose kraal was in sight of our house, was that day to take another wife. He had already three, but some of them were growing old. Of course great preparations were made; a large quantity of beer had been brewed; an ox or two were to be slaughtered; a dance and a feast are always expected, and various heathen customs are observed, some of which, to us, would be very disgusting. Of course, every one is expected to wear his best attire; that of the men consists of an apron made of the skin of a goat or wild animal, or strings of monkeys' tails; this is their only clothing. They are sometimes, however, very profuse in their ornaments of brass rings, feathers and beads. The married women wear a short petticoat, made from a cow's skin, which has been tanned, or oftentimes, by hard rubbing; this is a part of the bride's dress and is never worn before marriage. The young girl who was about to be married to this old man, how do you imagine she was taken to her betrothed? (the ceremony is always performed at the kraal of the husband). We heard a great noise of singing and shouting near the house, and on going to see what it was, I saw a number of people driving four or five head of cattle, and in front of them was the bride who had been sold or rather exchanged for cattle. You will be interested to know how she is dressed. They all wear the same style. She has no white veil or wreath of orange blossoms; her hair is all shaved off, with the exception of a tuft on the crown of her head, which is filled with a kind of unctuous red clay; this is the badge which shows that she is a wife; she wears a shirt made of a cow's skin, which also shows that she is now an Umfasi (woman) instead of Intombi (girl); but the bridal dress, or the dress which indicates her position, is an apron made from the skin of a buck ornamented with brass buttons. This is tied under her arms and hangs to her knees, she wears bead ornaments round her arms, ankles and forehead. A blanket, a few pieces of cloth, and two mats complete her trousseau. As this procession passed, I noticed my girls looked very sad; one of them remarked: "Had the missionaries never come here, that would have been our fate." I asked if they knew the girl, and to my surprise, they said "U Noshindom—the one who ran away the time of her engagement and came here for protection." "But," I said, "did not her friends promise her, if she would go home, that she need not marry this man?" "Yes," they replied, "and for a little while they were quiet; but Ushokun-duka having paid the cattle, demanded them of the girl. The father's affections were stronger for cows than for his own daughter, and she was whipped and driven away to be the wife of an old polygamist whom she loathed and despised." The missionary, on hearing of this, immediately mounted his horse and rode to the kraal, not to interfere, for that he had no right to do, neither would it have been wise, but simply to find out if the girl was there against her will, and to offer her protection. On reaching the place, he inquired if the report we had heard was true. They denied every charge, saying, "Ask the girl." She said, "No, I have not been whipped; I am here willingly." The missionary said: "I know you have been whipped and are afraid to own it." She stoutly denied having been troubled in any way. "Very well," was his reply. "If you prefer to remain, you can do so. I come to tell you, you can have shelter under my roof, if you wish." The missionary then went away, and the people continued their dancing, etc. The next morning be-

fore light, U Noshindom knocked at the kitchen door. You may be sure our native girls gave her a warm welcome. They cut off her red top, gave her soap and water for a bath, and lent her their clothing. When I went out in the morning to look after the breakfast, I found her neatly clad and as quietly at work as if she were an account of herself, stating that she waited till the people were merry with their beer, and then she slipped away and hid in a large ant-hole, where she staid all night, in a very uncomfortable plight. Her friends were not long in finding her out; they scolded, threatened, and if they could have laid hold of her, would have dragged her away. They then coaxed and promised, and begged of her to come and dwell with them, but she wisely kept within doors, and they dared not enter. She had been deceived once, and knew too well what would be her fate, if she went home. On being questioned, why she denied having been whipped, she replied, "For the reason you said yesterday, because I was afraid. I knew, too, I should be watched if my persecutors knew I was there against my will." She lived with me for two years and was always a faithful, tidy girl, and I am glad to say, ever afterwards a thoughtful girl. She learned to sew very nicely. I often felt quite proud of her needlework. She learned the Lord's Prayer, Commandments, the whole of the Scripture catechism in the Tract Primer, and many hymns. She afterwards became engaged to a good Christian young man belonging to the Wesleyan Mission Station. Then she went home to dig a garden and raise corn. This is a custom among all the natives, even the Christian natives observe it. The produce they are allowed for their own use after marriage. Some are ambitious to have a large crop, so that their future husbands may not think they are going to have an idle wife. So well did she behave, so faithful and industrious was she, that her father had no reason to think that she had been spoiled by living with the missionary, and for the time she remained at home, although surrounded with everything heathenish, we never heard one word to her discredit. She came regularly to the Prayer Meetings, Sunday services, and often an hour in the afternoon for sewing or reading, and always brought as many with her as she could persuade to come. She also taught her little sisters to come, and many of the hymns she had learned. When the time came for her to be married, we were all so glad to see her, that we all took pleasure in assisting her to cut and make her clothes. Perhaps you would like to know what she had this time in her wedding outfit. She had two print dresses, a dark and light one; two sets of underclothes, one black and one unbleached; her wedding dress was white muslin; she brought some stockings and shoes, a white straw hat and veil and a pair of white cotton gloves, a pocket handkerchief and a bottle of Cologne. She brought her things for me to take care of, and I was surprised to see the good sense she manifested in her purchases, for it is not uncommon to see the natives spend nearly all for useless finery. The day before her marriage, she came for her things and to say good-bye, and she looked sad, for she had left her home and friends and was now really to be separated from them. You may think she would be so glad that she was going to have a good home of her own and live as she wished, that she ought not to be sad; but even the heathens are not without natural affection. I said to her: "Are you not glad you are now Ushokundandika's wife, living like your sisters, with her, and amid filth and wretchedness? You are going to a good man, I think you will be happy, and trust you will be a good wife." She replied, "I am thankful, and I know to whom I owe my blessings; I am sorry for my sisters, but I am more sorry that they are willing to live as they do. If they wished to lead better lives, they could. If they loved Christ, he would free them from their bondage." And this one of our greatest trials, to see them contented, satisfied with their lot. We pity the people, and are sorry to see them so degraded, often unhappy, on account of their wicked lives. We wish to raise them. We tell them of the Saviour who died for them and who wished to save them from their sins, to make them happy when they die. But they are like many people in the world. Very few believe in the Gospel and accept it; many more believe that the missionaries tell them, and perhaps mean some time to become Christians, but far more love their own heathen customs and practices, and cling to them, caring not for God or His word.

How is it with you, my dear friends? Have you chosen to be among those whom the Lord delights to honor? Are you resisting the temptations of Satan and trying to live holy, pure lives? You live in a land of Gospel privileges; you have pious parents and teachers to pray for you. Do not grieve them by being willing to live away from Christ.

L. W. MELLEN.

After Dinner.

Laws are like cobwebs, which catch small flies, but are broken through by the great ones.

ALONZO, King of Arragon, used to say, in commendation of old age, "Old wood is best to burn; old wine to drink; old friends to trust; and old authors to read."

PAUL, a noted jester in Queen Elizabeth's reign, being introduced to her Majesty, she was pleased to bid him advance, and tell her faults. "No," said Paul, "I do not use to talk of that which all the town talks of."

A MAN being observed to affect much gravity, and to shake his head at other men's speeches, his neighbor used to compare it to "the shaking of a bottle, which is done to see if there be anything (wit) in their heads or no."

One said that his great grandfather, grandfather, and father died at sea; then, said another, "If I was you, I would never go to sea." Why, replied the other, "Where did your great grandfather, grandfather, and father die?" He answered, "In their beds." Then, said the first, "If I was you, I would never go to bed."

A MINISTER, being deprived for non-conformity, threatened with an angry tone: "That his appointment might cost a hundred men their lives, for what he could force." For which saying being apprehended, as a turbulent and seditious man, he upon examination said, "He meant no more than that he intended to practice physics."

A PARCEL of boys, going from a boarding-school to hunt rabbits, agreed to be "sent for fear of scaring them; but one

of the scholars, supposing they could not be scared by hearing a tongue they did not understand, cried out, as soon as he saw them, *Ecco unicuique!* i. e., Behold the rabbits; and they immediately fled into their burrows. And, when his companions rebuked his folly, the wise lad replied, "Who would have thought that the rabbits understood Latin?"

SIR NICHOLAS BACON, being appointed a Judge for the northern circuit, was strongly importuned for mercy, and to save his life, by a malfeactor, before sentence was passed; and, being inflexible on the side of justice, the malfeactor at last claimed kindred with his lordship. "Prithee," said my Lord, "how do you make that out?" "Why, if it please you, my Lord, your name is Bacon, and mine is Hog; in all ages, Bacon and Hog have been as good as one," but replied the Judge, "You and I cannot be a-kin, unless you be hanged; if Hog is not Bacon, till it be hanged."

A statue of Columbus is to be erected in the city of Mexico.

A dreadful famine is reported among the people of the Corea.

Hon. John Bright (the British statesman) favorite amusement is fishing.

In the next Iowa Legislature there will be a Lyon, a Bullock, two Foxes and three Ducks.

The President of Hampden-Sidney College, Va., states that but one student has died at that institution in one hundred years.

It is said that in one of the churches in New York city, a slate, containing a list of the weddings to be celebrated during the week, is hung in the vestibule every Sunday.

Rev. Dr. L. S. Mowley—who has been for a quarter of a century Superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Mission at Foo Chow, China—has now been appointed to the charge of the Mission of that Church in Japan. An excellent appointment.

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